

Assembly Bill No. 47

Passed the Assembly September 11, 2015

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate September 10, 2015

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2015, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to add Section 8235.1 to the Education Code, relating to preschool.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 47, McCarty. State preschool program.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer all California state preschool programs, which include part-day age and developmentally appropriate programs for 3- and 4-year-old children, as provided. Existing law provides that 3- and 4-year-old children are eligible for the state part-day preschool program if the family meets one of several eligibility requirements, including income eligibility.

This bill would require, on or before June 30, 2018, all eligible children who are not enrolled in transitional kindergarten to have access to the state preschool program the year before they enter kindergarten, if their parents wish to enroll them, contingent upon the appropriation of sufficient funding in the annual Budget Act for this purpose.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the Preschool for All Act of 2015.

SEC. 2. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Recent reforms such as the common core state standards and the local control funding formula establish greater quality and equity in California's public K–12 education system.

(b) None of these reforms, however, address the reality that the achievement gap is present well before children first step through the kindergarten classroom door.

(c) Recent research shows that by the age of two, low-income children are six months behind in language development relative to their higher income peers. By age five, low-income children are more than two years behind in language development.

(d) Research shows that California children with the largest gaps in school readiness and achievement are the least likely to participate in any preschool program and the least likely to attend high-quality programs.

(e) Tens of thousands of eligible children do not attend state preschool or federal Head Start services, and only one-quarter of all four-year-old children are eligible to attend transitional kindergarten.

(f) Children who are not reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to not graduate from high school on time.

(g) Only 48 percent of California 3rd grade pupils test proficient or better in English-language arts.

(h) More than 100 studies nationally have shown that high-quality preschool significantly improves children's school readiness and school performance.

(i) Numerous longitudinal studies show that high-quality preschool decreases grade retention and special education placements, and increases high school graduation rates, college enrollment, and earnings as adults as well as decreases costs in criminal justice and welfare.

(j) Research over the last decade has shown that early learning in two or more languages increases children's ability to think flexibly and builds skills that are increasingly critical to later success in college and career.

(k) In the 2014–15 annual Budget Act, the Legislature and Governor committed to providing all low-income children with at least one year of state preschool or transitional kindergarten.

(l) An independent research analysis of over 20 preschool programs demonstrated that quality preschool provides a return of \$15,000 for every child served.

(m) If California were to invest in high-quality preschool, the overall savings in prison system expenditures alone are estimated to be \$1.1 billion a year due to the reduction in prison population by 13,000.

SEC. 3. Section 8235.1 is added to the Education Code, to read:

8235.1. On or before June 30, 2018, all eligible children, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 8263, who are not enrolled in transitional kindergarten shall have access to the state preschool

program the year before they enter kindergarten, if their parents wish to enroll them, contingent upon the appropriation of sufficient funding in the annual Budget Act for this purpose.

Approved _____, 2015

Governor